How to Use OBS and Set Up for a First Stream

Introduction

OBS (Open Broadcaster Software) is a powerful and free tool for live streaming. This guide will walk you through everything you need to know to set up OBS and go live for the first time.

1. Download and Install OBS

Step-by-Step Instructions:
1. Visit the [OBS website](https://obsproject.com/).
2. Select your operating system (Windows, macOS, or Linux).
3. Download the installer and run it.
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete the installation.

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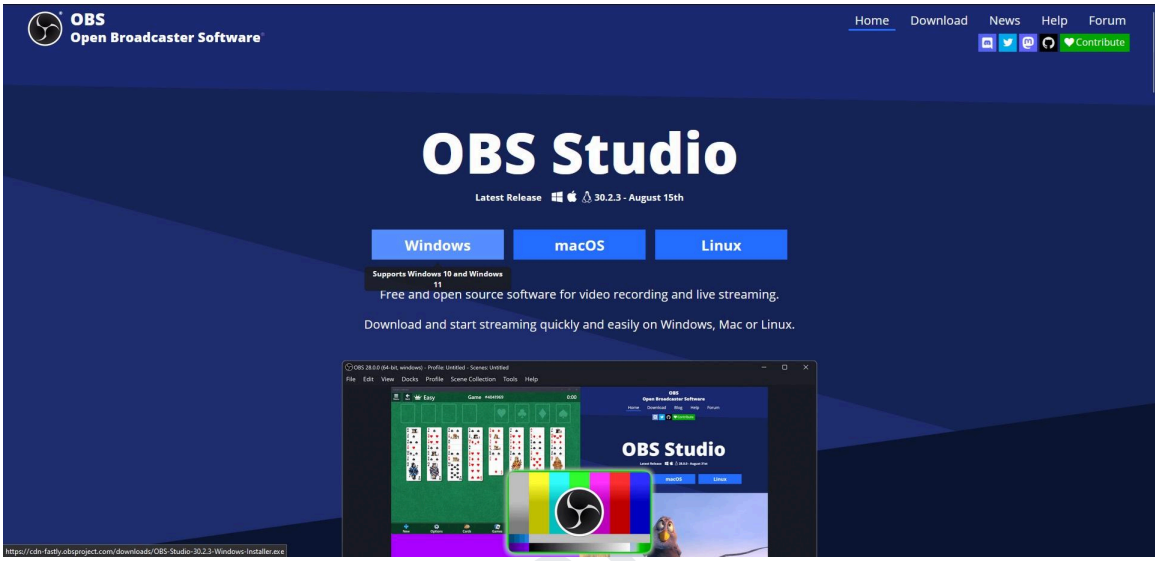
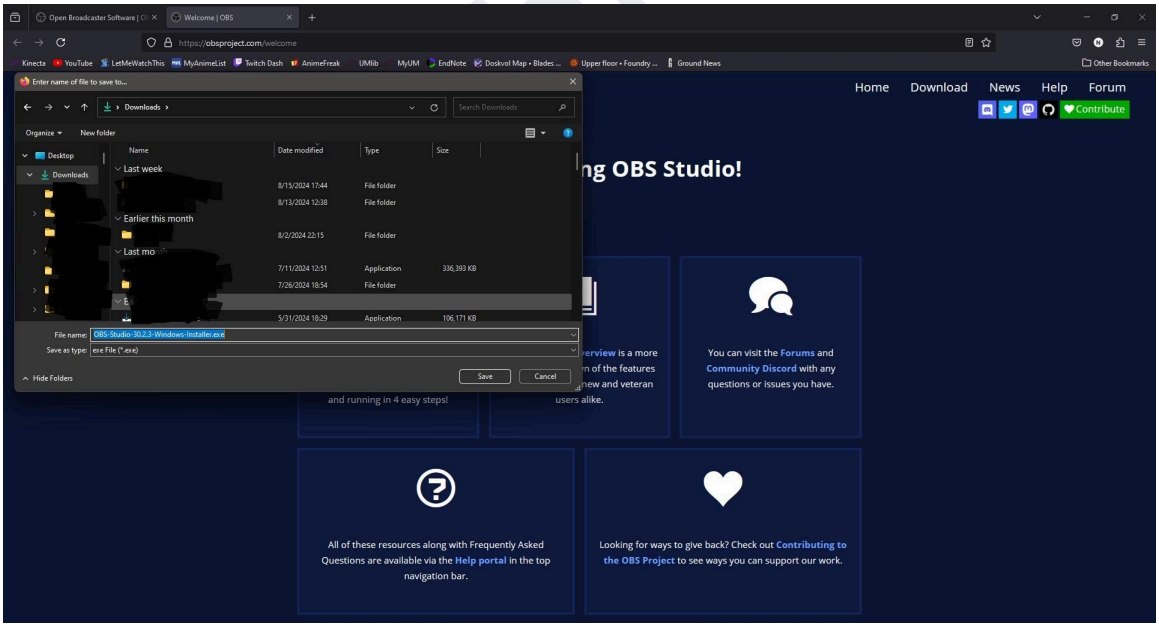
Visual Aid:





2. Initial Setup

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Launch OBS.
2. The Auto-Configuration Wizard will pop up. Choose 'Optimize for streaming, recording is

secondary' and click 'Next.'
3. Follow the prompts to configure your settings based on your computer's performance.

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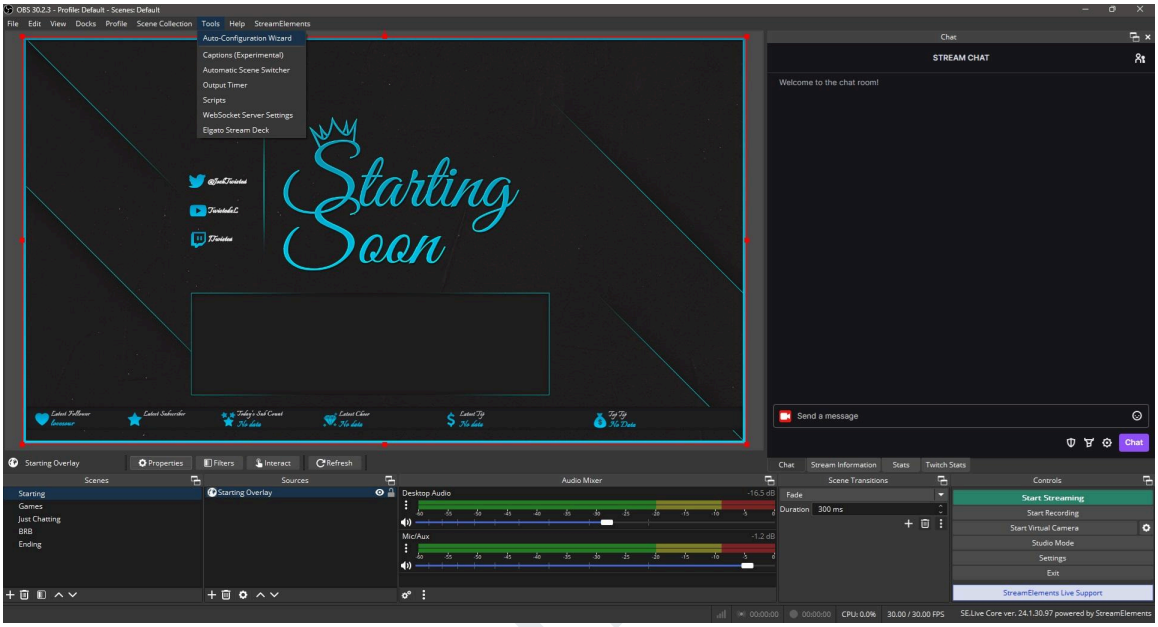
Visual Aid:



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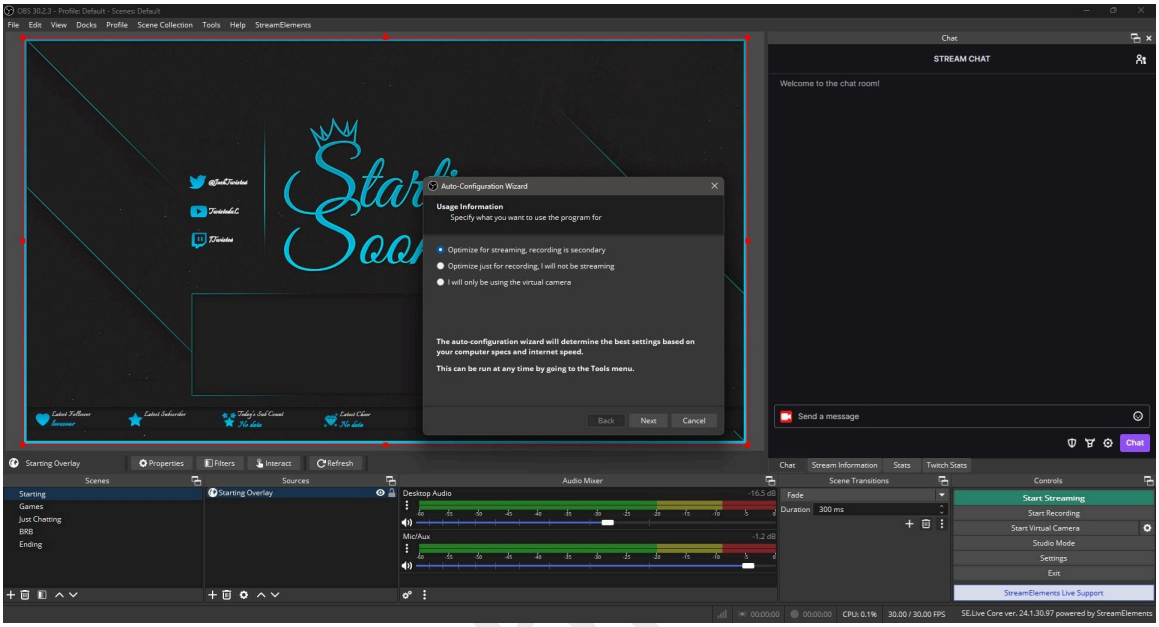
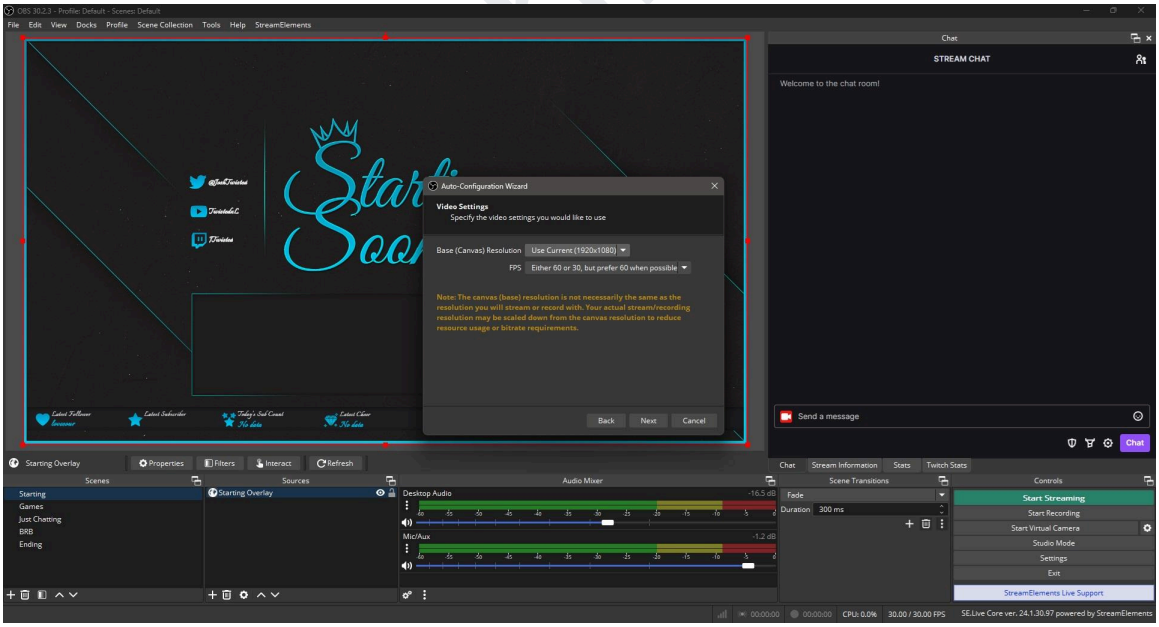

Auto-Configuration Wizard
Usage Information
Specify what you want to use the program for
Optimize for streaming, recording is secondary
Optimize just for recording, I will not be streaming
I will only be using the virtual camera
The auto-configuration wizard will determine the best settings based on your computer specs and internet speed.
This can be run at any time by going to the Tools menu.
Back
Next
Cancel
STREAM CHAT
Welcome to the chat room!
Send a message
Chat
Start Streaming
Start Recording
Start Virtual Camera
Studio Mode
Settings
Exit


Auto-Configuration Wizard
Video Settings
Specify the video settings you would like to use
Base (Canvas) Resolution
Use Current (1920x1080)
FPS
Either 60 or 30, but prefer 60 when possible
Note: The canvas (base) resolution is not necessarily the same as the resolution you will stream or record with. Your actual stream/recording resolution may be scaled down from the canvas resolution to reduce resource usage or bitrate requirements.
Back
Next
Cancel
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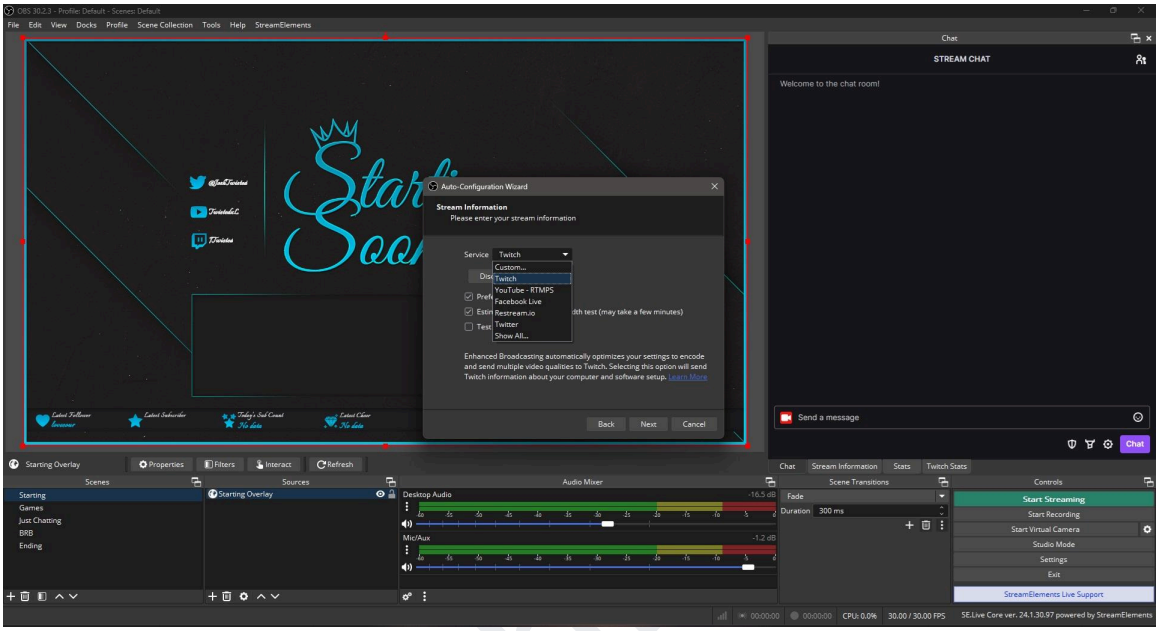

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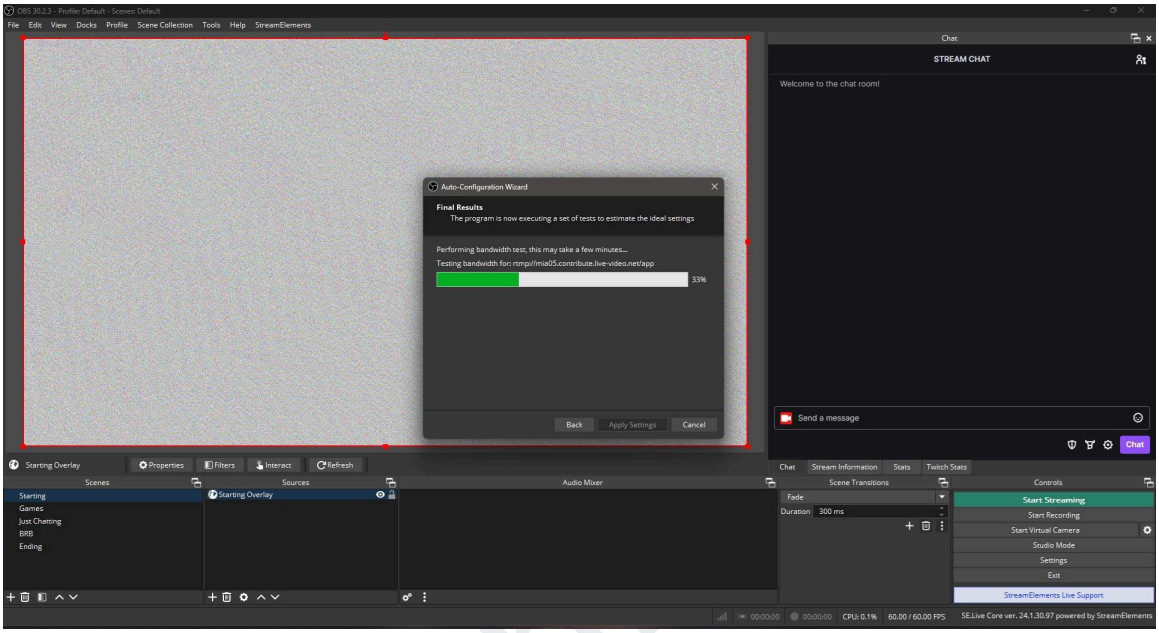

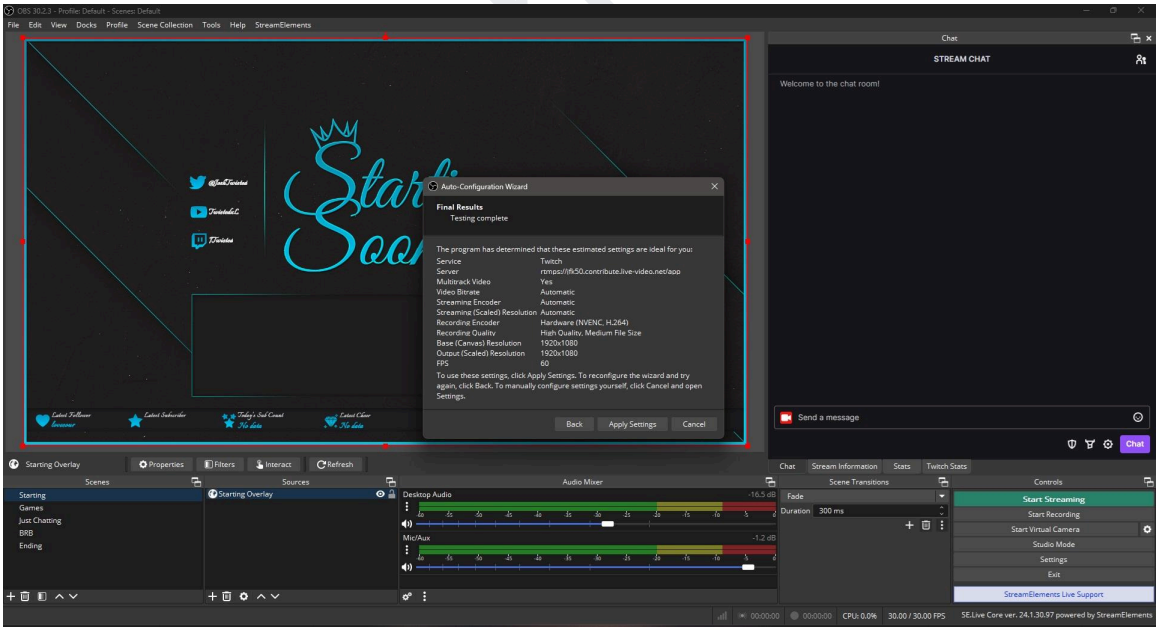

3. Creating a Scene

Explanation:

A scene in OBS is a collection of sources (like video capture, images, and audio) that you want to display in your stream.

Step-by-Step Instructions:
1. In the OBS interface, locate the 'Scenes' box at the bottom left.
2. Click the '+' button to add a new scene. Name your scene (e.g., 'First Stream') and click 'OK.'

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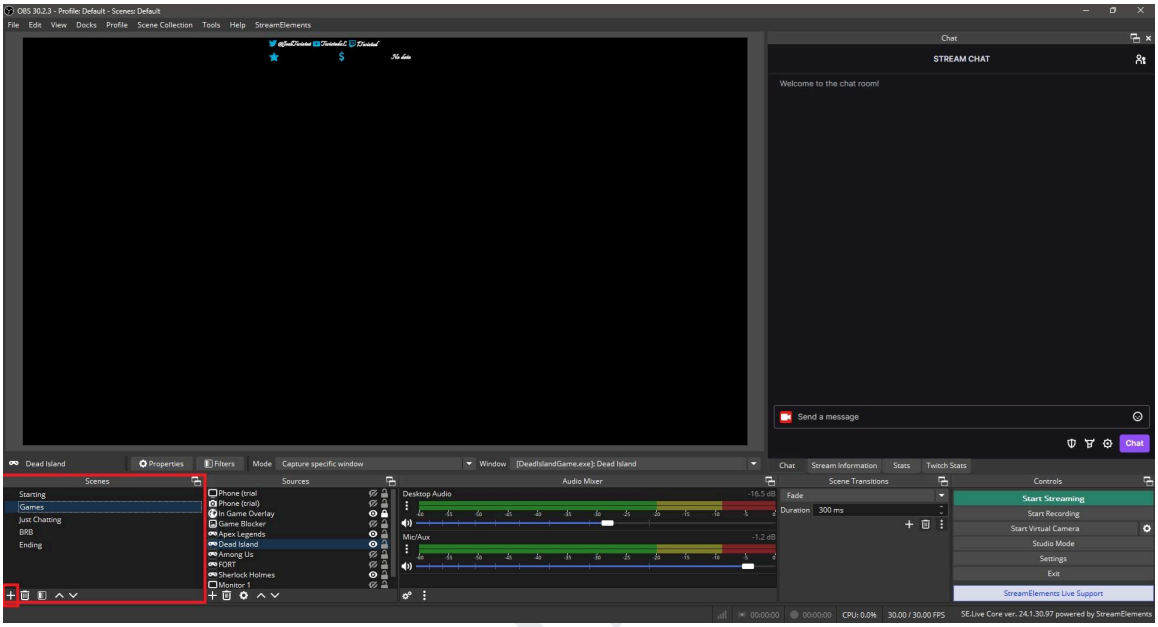
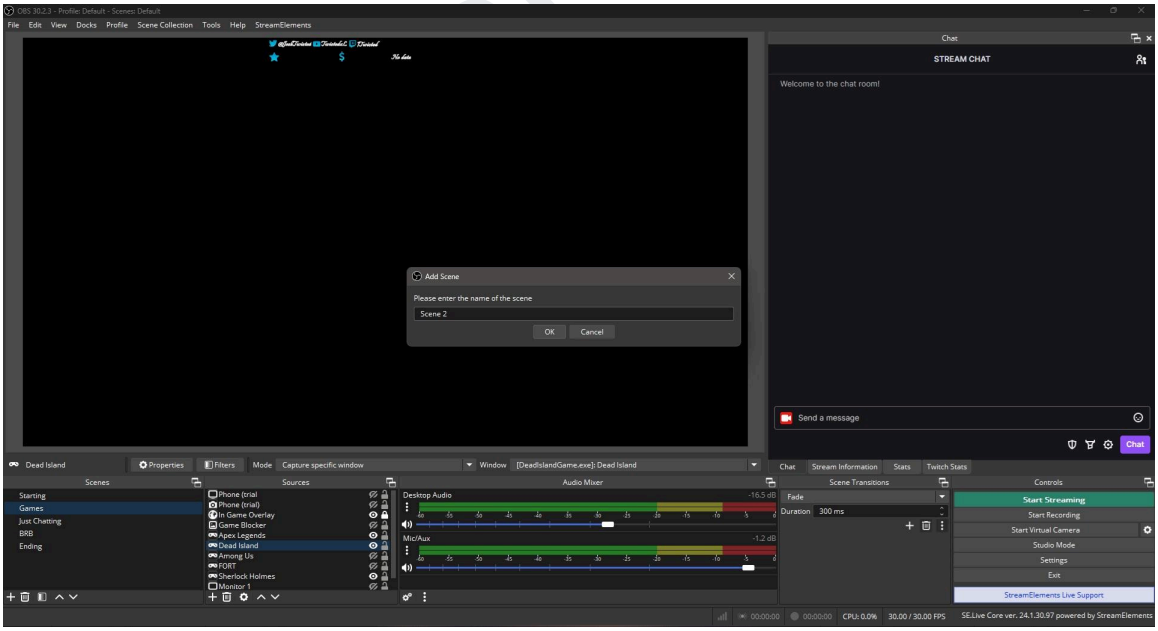
Visual Aid:





4. Adding Sources to Your Scene

Explanation:

Sources are the individual elements that make up your scene. This can include your display,

webcam, images, text, and more.
Step-by-Step Instructions:
1. In the 'Sources' box next to 'Scenes,' click the '+' button to add a new source.
2. Choose 'Display Capture' to capture your screen. Name it and click 'OK.'
3. In the properties window, select the display you want to capture and click 'OK.'
4. Repeat the process to add a 'Video Capture Device' for your webcam. Select your webcam from the list and click 'OK.'
5. Add 'Audio Input Capture' to capture your microphone audio. Select your microphone from the list and click 'OK.'

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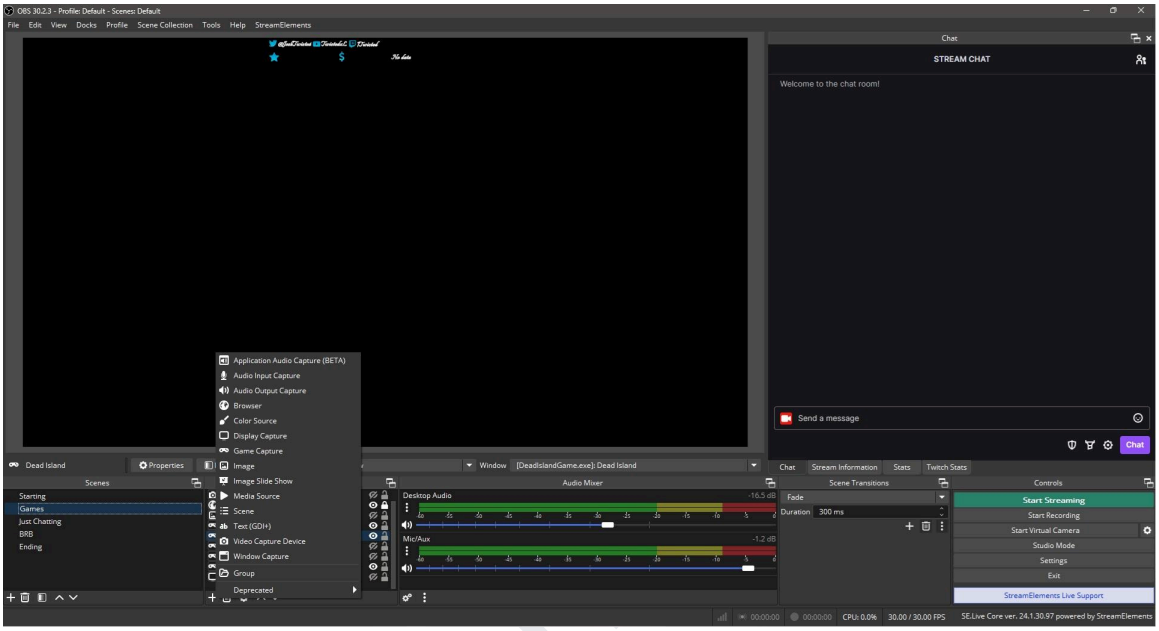
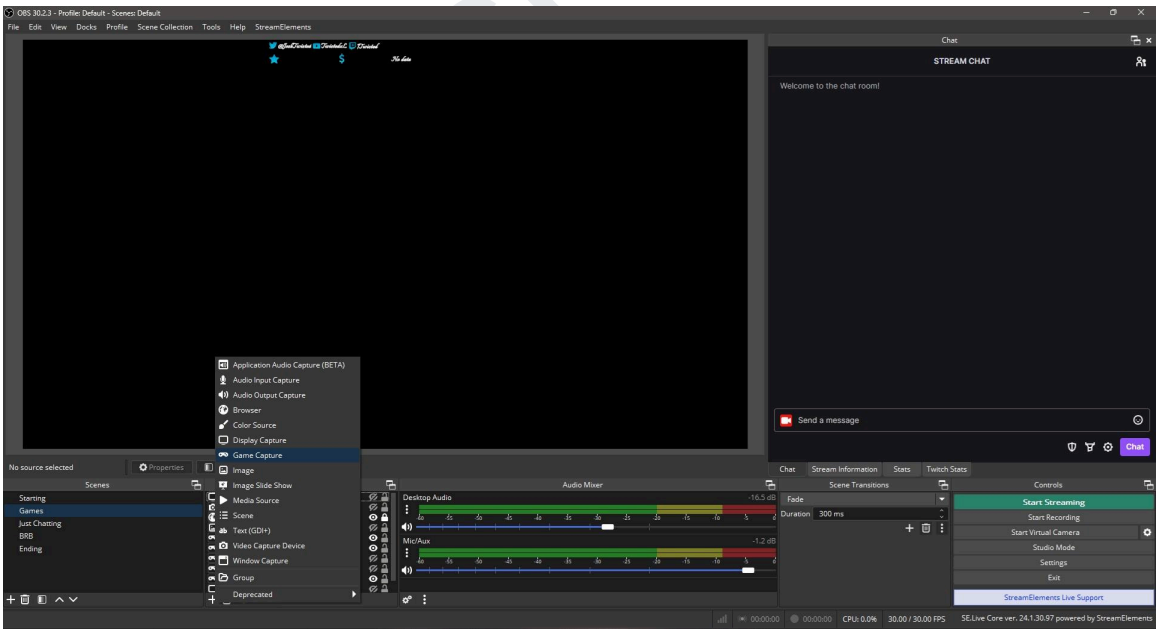
Visual Aid:


STREAM CHAT
Welcome to the chat room!
Send a message
Chat
Application Audio Capture (BETA)
Audio Input Capture
Audio Output Capture
Browser
Color Source
Display Capture
Game Capture
Image
Image Slide Show
Media Source
Scene
Text (GDI+)
Video Capture Device
Window Capture
Group
Deprecated
Audio Mixer
Desktop Audio
Mic/Aux
Scene Transitions
Controls
Start Streaming
Start Recording
Start Virtual Camera
Studio Mode
Settings
Exit
StreamElements Live Support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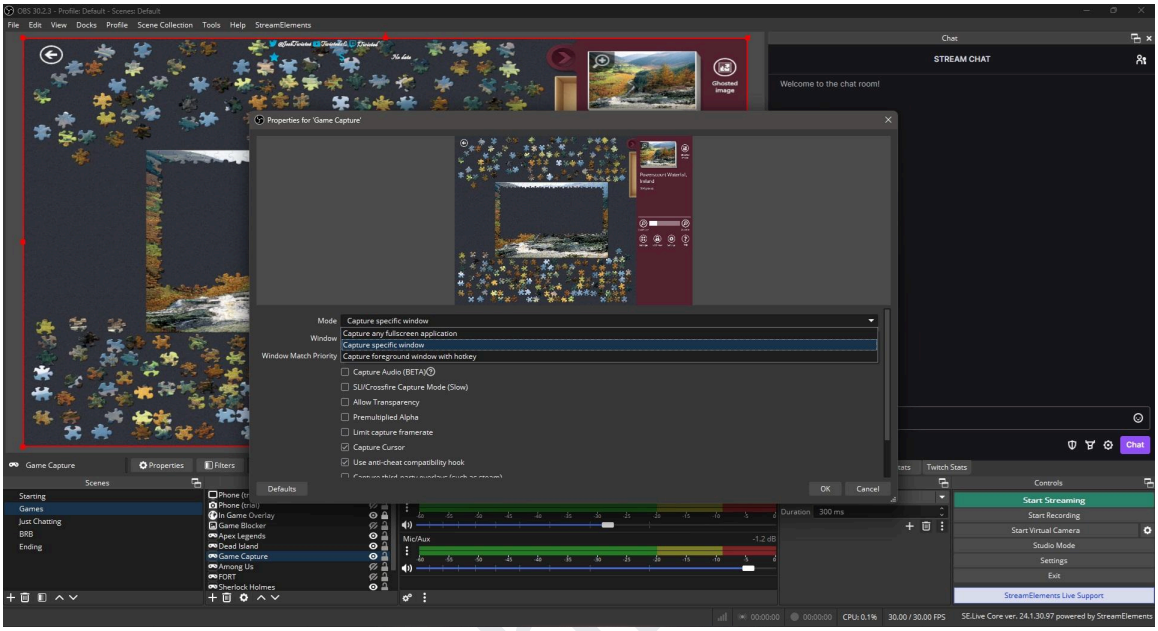
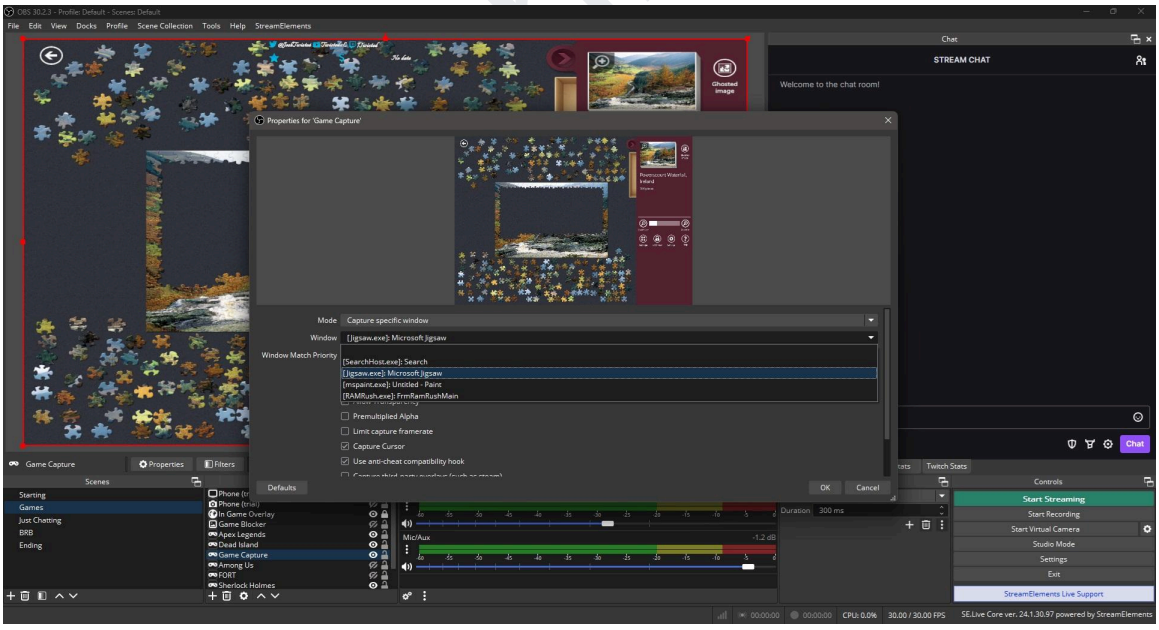

Properties for 'Game Capture'
Mode
Capture specific window
Window
Capture any fullscreen application
Capture specific window
Window Match Priority
Capture foreground window with hotkey
Capture Audio (BETA)
SLI/Crossfire Capture Mode (Slow)
Allow Transparency
Premultiplied Alpha
Limit capture framerate
Capture Cursor
Use anti-cheat compatibility hook
Defaults
OK
Cancel
STREAM CHAT
Welcome to the chat room!
Start Streaming
Start Recording
Start Virtual Camera
Studio Mode
Settings
Exit
StreamElements Live Support


Properties for 'Game Capture'
Mode
Capture specific window
Window
[jigsaw.exe]: Microsoft Jigsaw
Window Match Priority
[SearchHost.exe]: Search
[jigsaw.exe]: Microsoft Jigsaw
[mspaint.exe]: Untitled - Paint
[RAMRush.exe]: FrmRamRushMain
Premultiplied Alpha
Limit capture framerate
Capture Cursor
Use anti-cheat compatibility hook
Defaults
OK
Cancel
STREAM CHAT
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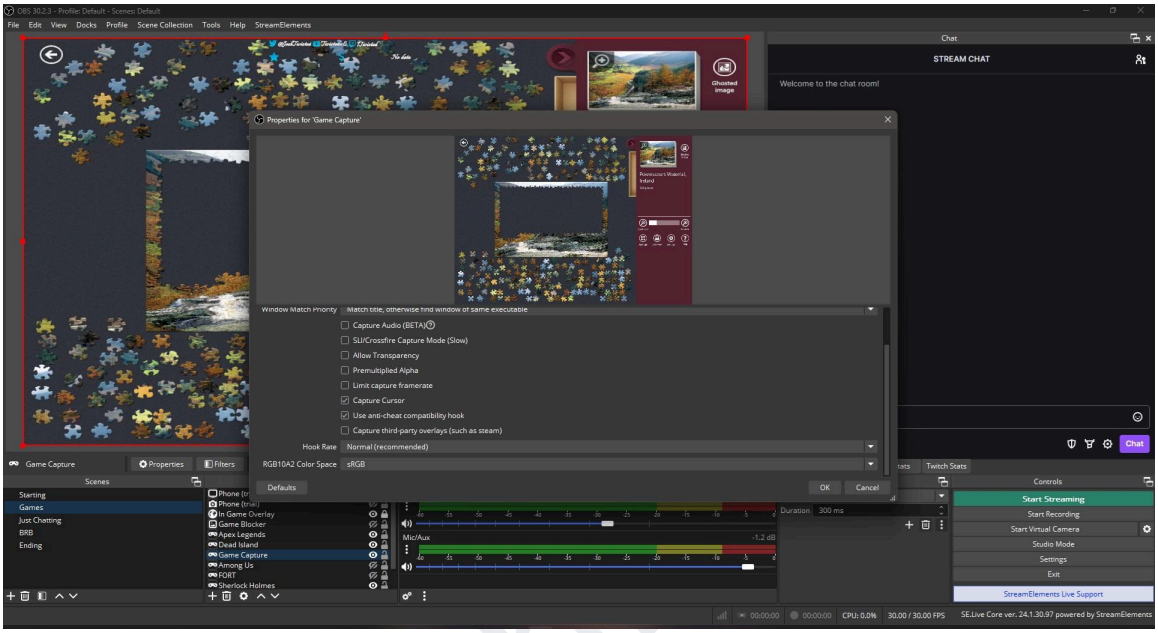
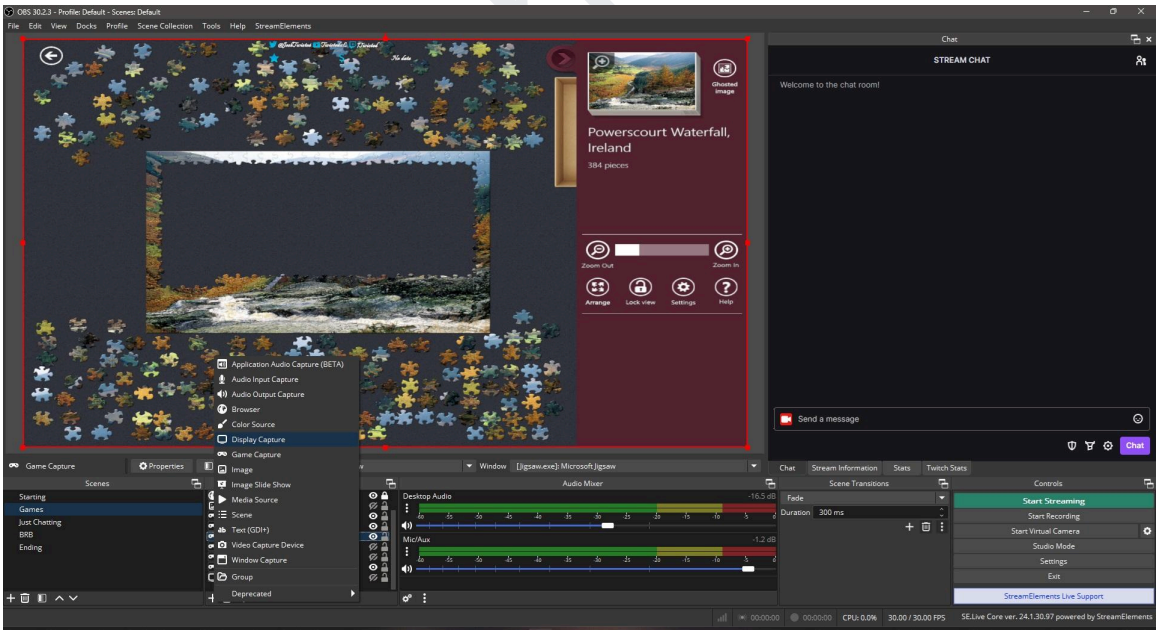

Properties for 'Game Capture'
STREAM CHAT
Welcome to the chat room!
Start Streaming
Start Recording
Start Virtual Camera
Studio Mode
Settings
Exit


Powerscourt Waterfall, Ireland
384 pieces
STREAM CHAT
Welcome to the chat room!
Send a message
Start Streaming
Start Recording
Start Virtual Camera
Studio Mode
Settings
Exit

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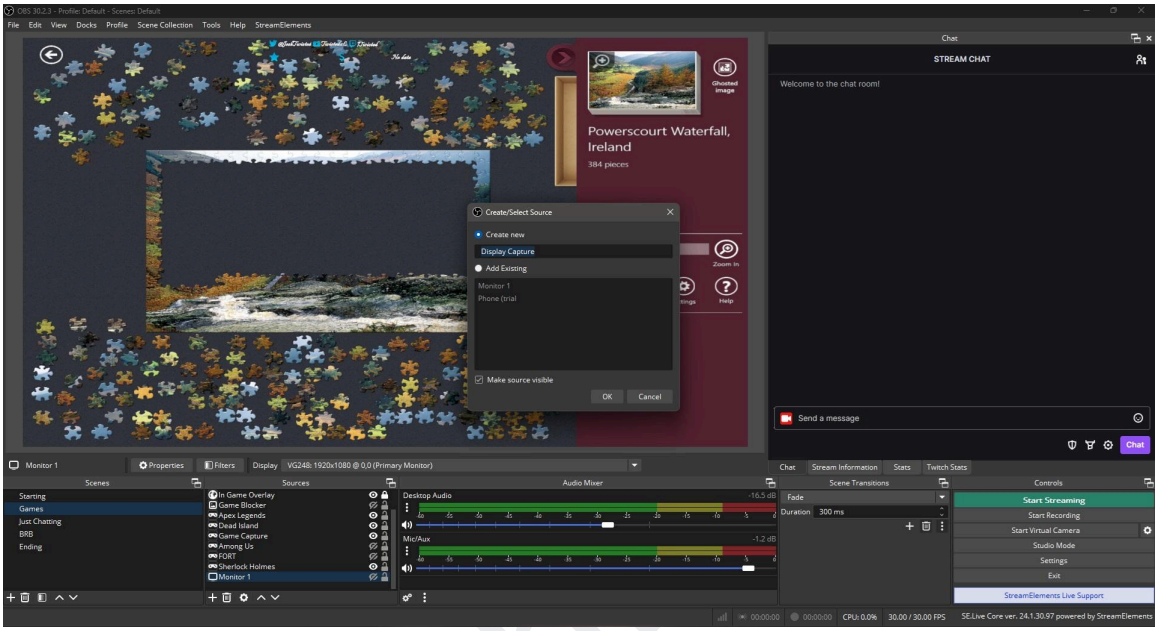
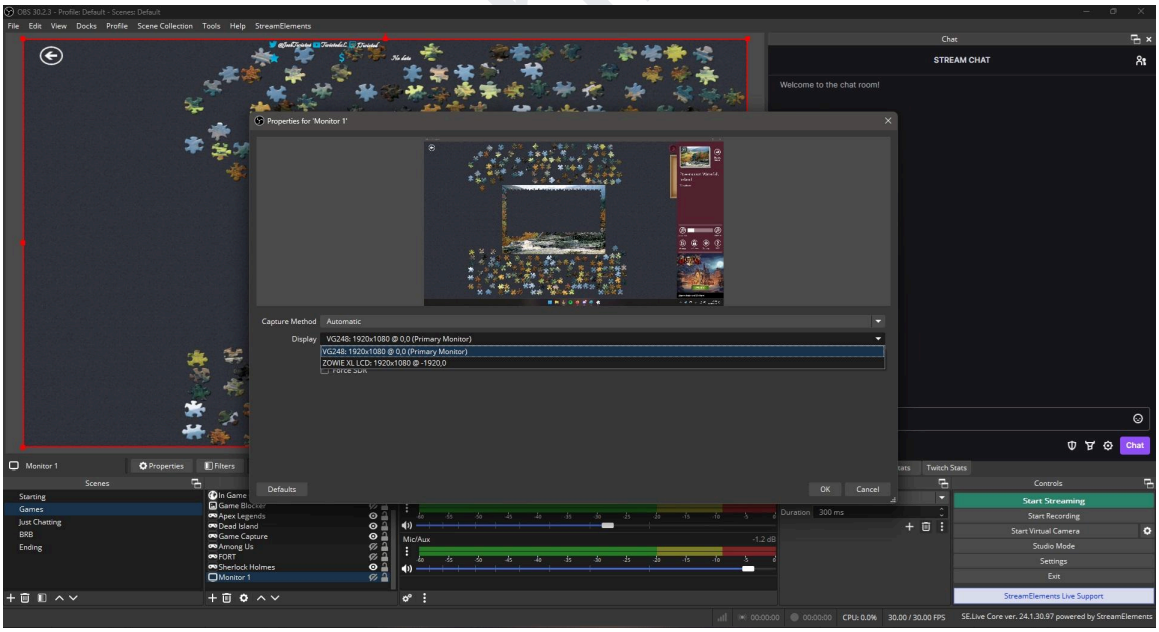
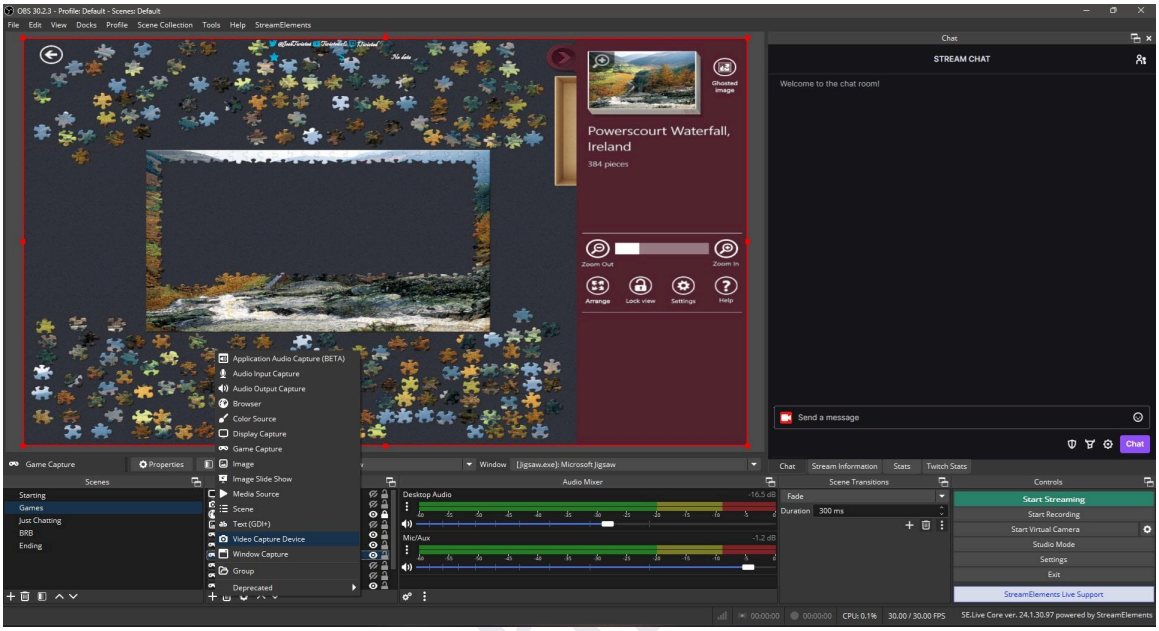
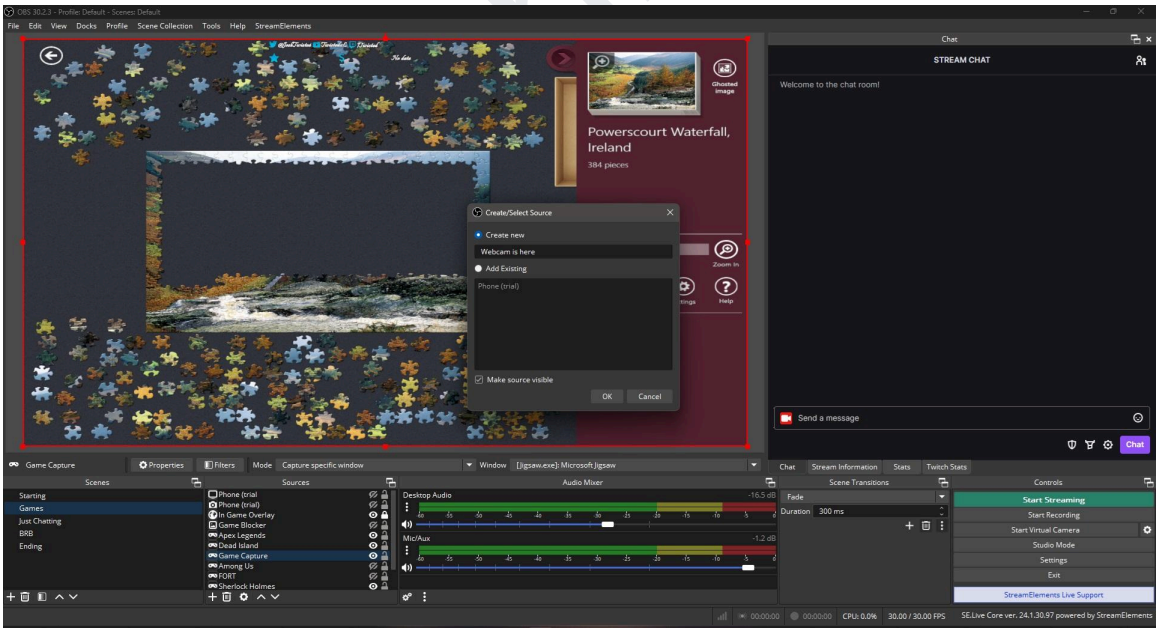

Powerscourt Waterfall, Ireland
384 pieces
Create/Select Source
Create new
Display Capture
Add Existing
Make source visible
OK
Cancel
STREAM CHAT
Welcome to the chat room!
Send a message
Chat
Start Streaming
Start Recording
Start Virtual Camera
Studio Mode
Settings
Exit


Properties for 'Monitor 1'
Capture Method
Automatic
Display
VG248: 1920x1080 @ 0,0 (Primary Monitor)
ZOWIE XL LCD: 1920x1080 @ -1920,0
STREAM CHAT
Welcome to the chat room!
Start Streaming
Start Recording
Start Virtual Camera
Studio Mode
Settings
Exit





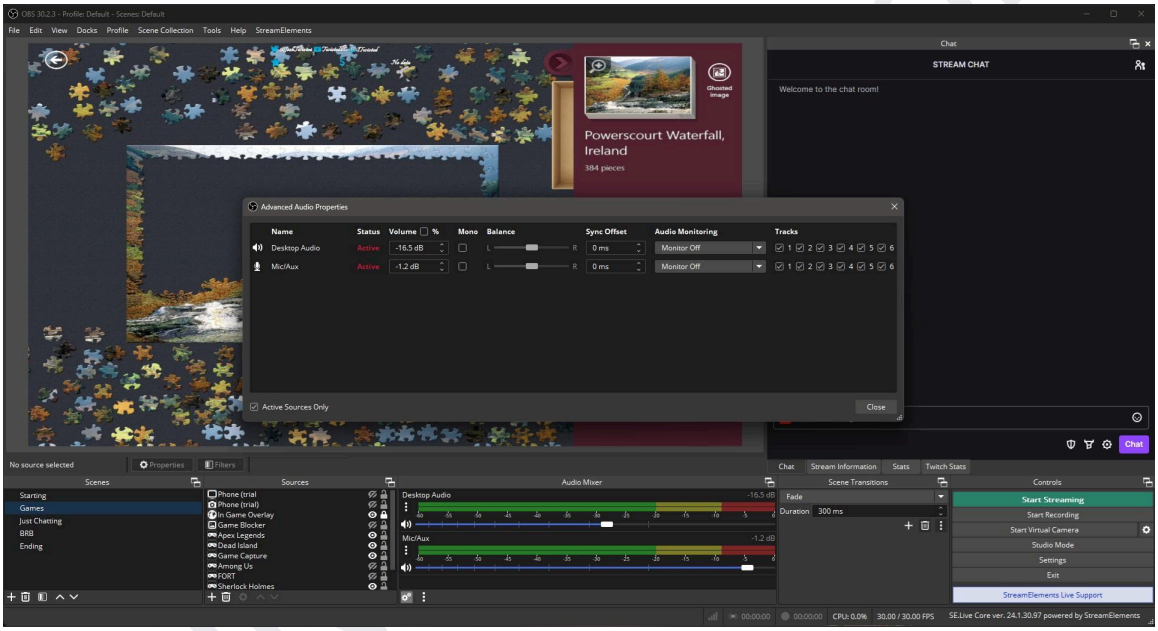
5. Configuring Audio Settings

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. In the 'Audio Mixer' box, you'll see your audio sources (e.g., Mic/Aux and Desktop Audio).
2. Click the gear icon next to each audio source and select 'Properties' to adjust settings like

volume and device selection.
Tips:
- Ensure your microphone volume is not too high to avoid distortion.
- Test your audio levels before going live to ensure a good balance between your voice and any background audio.

Visual Aid:



6. Configuring Video Settings

Step-by-Step Instructions:
1. Go to 'Settings' in the bottom right corner of the OBS interface.
2. Click on 'Video' in the left-hand menu.
3. Set your 'Base (Canvas) Resolution' to your screen resolution (e.g., 1920x1080).
4. Set your 'Output (Scaled) Resolution' to the desired streaming resolution (e.g., 1280x720 for better performance).
5. Choose your 'Common FPS Values' (e.g., 30 or 60 FPS).
Tips:
- Higher resolutions and FPS require more processing power and bandwidth. Choose settings that your computer and internet connection can handle.

Visual Aid:
Include a screenshot of the 'Video' settings window.

7. Stream Settings

Step-by-Step Instructions:
1. In the 'Settings' menu, click on 'Stream.'
2. Select your streaming service (Twitch, YouTube, Facebook, etc.) from the 'Service' dropdown menu.
3. Obtain your stream key from your streaming platform's dashboard.
4. Enter the stream key into the 'Stream Key' field in OBS and click 'OK.'

Visual Aid:
Include a screenshot of the 'Stream' settings window.

8. Adding Overlays and Alerts

Step-by-Step Instructions:
1. Use a platform like Streamlabs or Streamelements to create overlays and alerts.
2. Copy the URL provided by the platform for your overlay.
3. In OBS, click the '+' button in the 'Sources' box and select 'Browser.'
4. Paste the URL into the URL field and adjust the width and height as needed. Click 'OK.'

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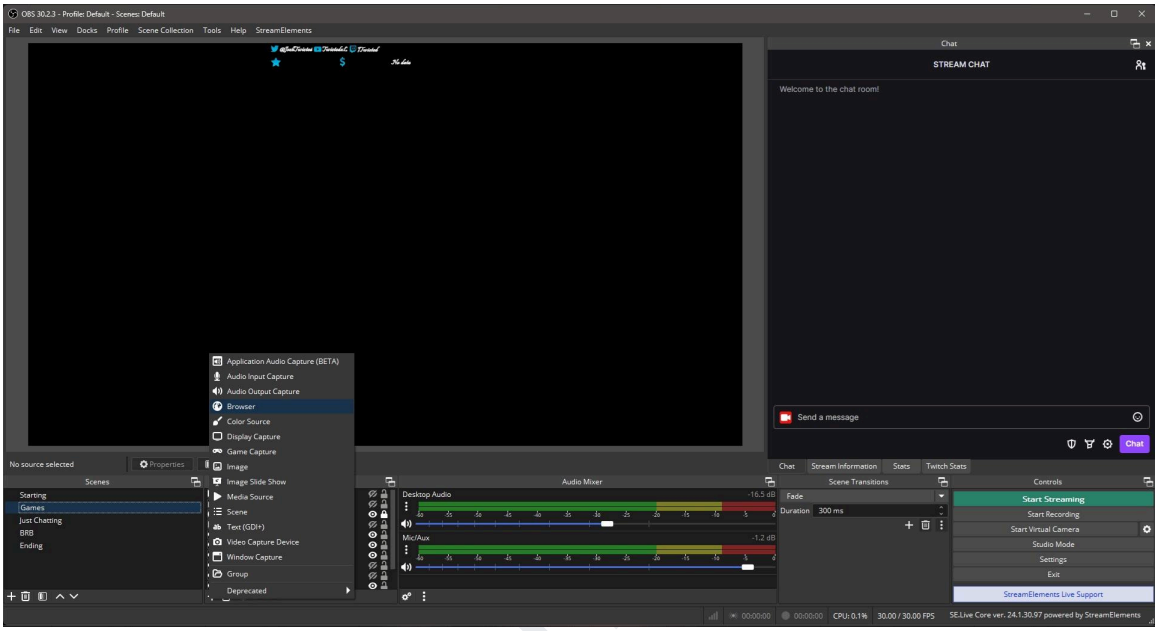
Visual Aid:


Application Audio Capture (BETA)
Audio Input Capture
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Display Capture
Game Capture
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Image Slide Show
Media Source
Scene
Text (GDI+)
Video Capture Device
Window Capture
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Deprecated
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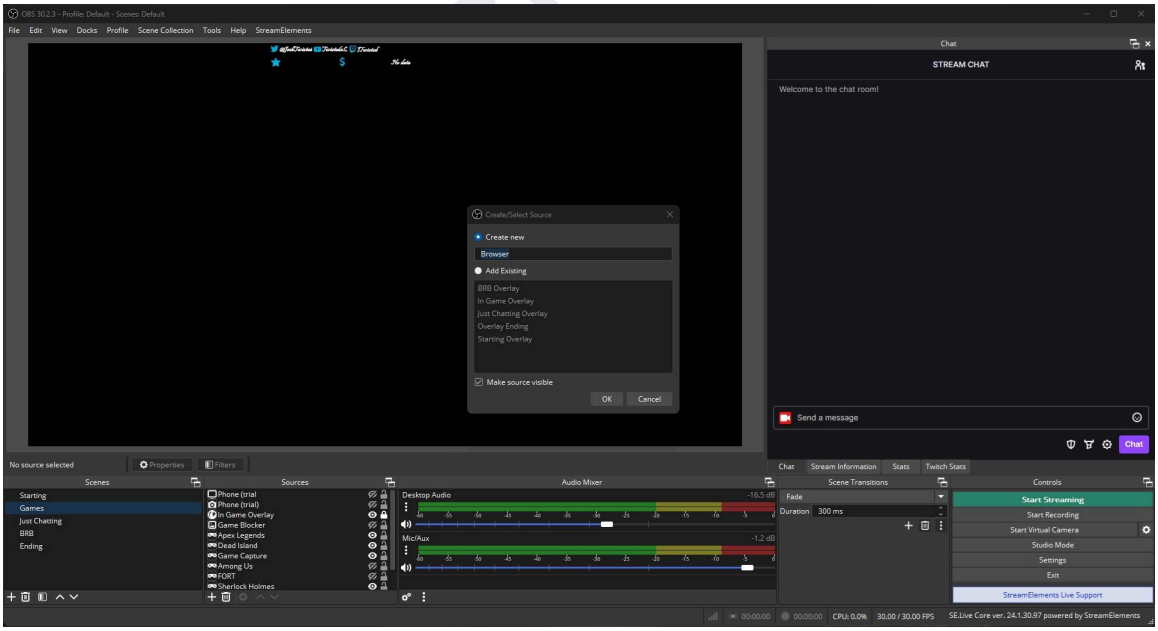
Create/Select Source
Create new
Browser
Add Existing
BRB Overlay
In Game Overlay
Just Chatting Overlay
Overlay Ending
Starting Overlay
Make source visible
OK
Cancel
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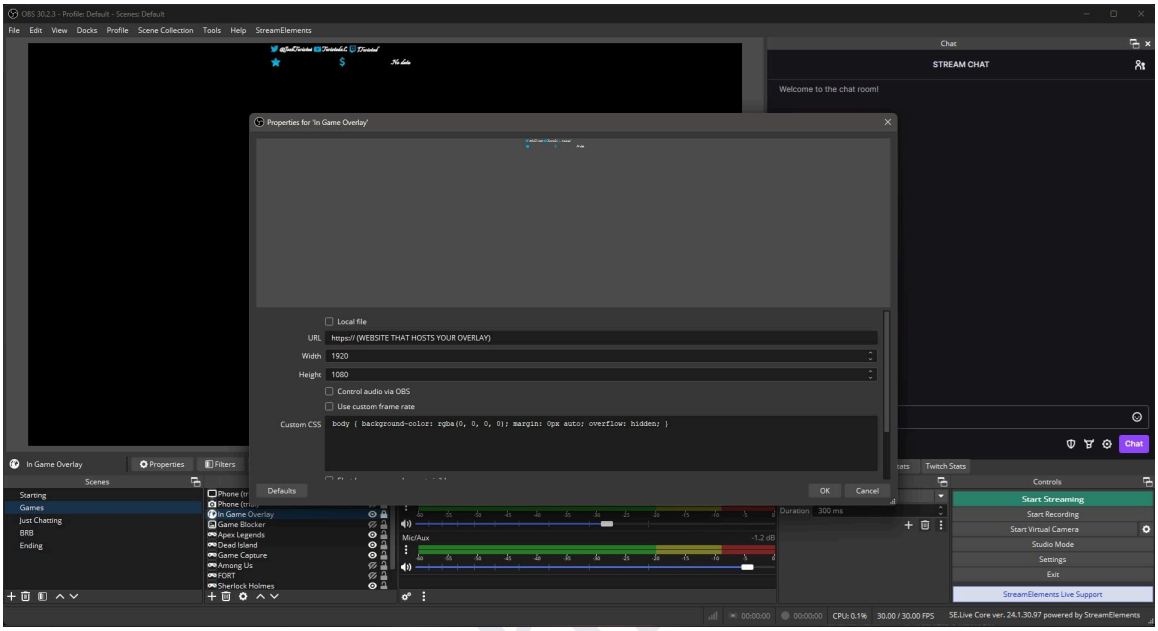

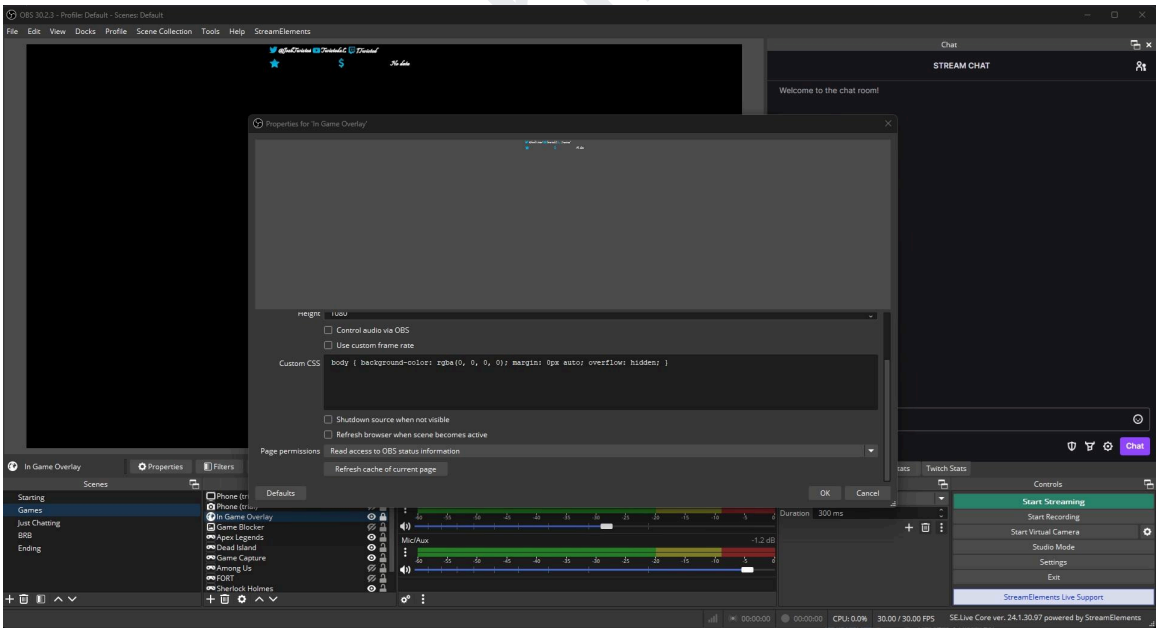

9. Going Live

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Before going live, click 'Start Recording' in OBS to test your setup. Record a short video to

ensure everything is working correctly.
2. When you're ready, click 'Start Streaming' in the OBS interface.
3. Monitor your stream on your streaming platform's dashboard to ensure it's running smoothly.
Tips:
- Keep an eye on your stream health and chat to engage with viewers and address any issues quickly.
- Have a backup plan in case of technical difficulties (e.g., restarting OBS or your computer).

Visual Aid:

Include a screenshot of the 'Start Streaming' button in the OBS interface.

Conclusion

Congratulations! You've set up OBS and are ready to go live for the first time. Remember to test your setup regularly and make adjustments as needed to ensure the best streaming experience for you and your viewers.

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